DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 289 297 EC 201 258

AUTHOR Miller, Ronald C.; And Others
TITLE Project RECURSO: 1985-1986 End of Year Report. OEA Evaluation Report.
INSTITUTION New York City Board of Education, Brooklyn. Office of Educational Assessment.
PUB DATE Jul 87
NOTE 36p.; Prepared by the Special Education Evaluation Unit.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Bilingual Teachers; *Disabilities; Elementary Education; Inservice Teacher Education; *Limited English Speaking; Parent Education; *Parent School Relationship; Parent Workshops; *Program Effectiveness; Special Education; Student Evaluation; Teacher Workshops
IDENTIFIERS *RECURSO Project NY

ABSTRACT

The report presents evaluation findings on the RECURSO Project which was designed to provide training to bilingual teachers, School-Based Support Teams (SBSTs), and parents of limited English proficient (LEP) special education students. Twenty schools with the greatest number of bilingual, self-contained special education classes in grades 3 through 8 were identified. Five different types of training opportunities were provided during the first year: one-on-one, on-site training sessions, five regional after-school workshops attended by 54 SBSTs and 78 teachers, two 4-day summer institutes attended by 36 SBSTs and 74 teachers, and seven parent workshops provided to a total of 70 parents. Activities addressed two of the three basic project goals: improvement of instruction through teacher training and improvement of parent-school interaction through parent workshops. (CL)

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PROJECT RECURSO
1985-1986
END OF YEAR REPORT

OEA Evaluation Report

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Evaluation Section Report
Robert Tobias, Administrator
Judith S. Torres, Senior Manager

July, 1987

PROJECT RECURSO
1985-1986
END OF YEAR REPORT

Prepared by the O.E.A.
Special Education
Evaluation Unit

Ronald C. Miller,
Evaluation Manager

Marcia Torres,
Evaluation Specialist

Arnold Simmel,
Evaluation Specialist

Ada Frumerman,
Evaluation Consultant

Lynn Mulkey,
Evaluation Consultant

EC 201258

New York City Public Schools
Office of Educational Assessment
Richard Guttenberg, Director

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PROJECT RECURSO
EVALUATION SUMMARY
1985-1986

This report examines the 1985-86 RECURSO project which operated in 20 sites in five special education regions of the City of New York. Title VII funds were awarded during the 1985-86 school year to the Division of Special Education to initiate a training program for bilingual teachers, School-Based Support Teams (S.B.S.T.s) and parents of limited English-proficient (LEP) special education students. The training activities were designed to meet the three basic goals of the project: to improve the assessment process, the delivery of instructional services, and the interaction between the schools and the parents of LEP special education students. This evaluation presents the characteristics of students and teachers who were designated participants in the RECURSO project, the implementation of the program and the participants' evaluation of the quality and relevance of the training events offered by Project RECURSO.

As specified in the project guidelines, RECURSO targeted schools within the New York City School system which had the greatest number of bilingual, self-contained, special education classes of students in grades three through eight with low LAB scores. The RECURSO population consisted of 20 schools and the S.B.S.T.s affiliated with them, 362 students (and their parents) and 34 teachers. Most training events provided by the RECURSO project were open to all interested S.B.S.T.s and teachers of LEP, special education students.

The majority of the RECURSO students were between nine and 12 years of age, in grades three through six, and had LAB scores within the lowest five percentiles. The majority of RECURSO teachers had teaching credentials in areas germane to the teaching of LEP special education students; however, they had limited teaching experience. Thus the majority of students and teachers in the classes selected to participate in the project had the characteristics for which the program was designed.

Even though the project was not fully staffed during the first year, five different types of training opportunities were provided: one-on-one, on-site training sessions (54 sessions for targeted RECURSO teachers); five regional after-school workshops attended by 54 S.B.S.T.s and 78 teachers (approximately 75 percent of whom were designated RECURSO personnel); two four-day summer institutes attended by 36 S.B.S.T.s and 74 teachers (approximately 50 percent of whom were designated RECURSO personnel); and seven parent workshops provided to a total of 70 parents. Ninety-one percent of the teachers and S.B.S.T.s and 83 percent of the parents who participated in the RECURSO workshops gave positive feedback on each aspect of the workshops.

RECURSO staff provided training activities which fully addressed two out of the three basic project goals: improvement of instruction through teacher training and improvement of parent-school interaction through parent workshops. The only goal which was not fully addressed was that of improving assessment, due primarily to the fact that the psychologist was not hired during the first year. However, other RECURSO staff members began to gather relevant information on appropriate assessment procedures and provided limited training to teachers and S.B.S.T.s in this area.

The Division of Special Education set specific outcome objectives to be met at the end of the first program year. However, because implementation was so limited during this period, discussion of outcome objectives was considered premature; thus it is not included in this report.

The following are recommendations for the second year:

- Implement the project as proposed.
- Staffing the project as proposed.
- Expand efforts to involve RECURSO parents in the workshops by supplementing each pre-set RECURSO workshop agenda with topics which are of immediate interest to parents such as current changes in immigration laws or E.S.L. training. Additionally, childcare should be provided on the premises during parent meetings.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Office of Educational Assessment conducted an evaluation of the 1985-86 RECURSO project which was funded by Title VII and was implemented by the Division of Special Education. The program was designed to provide training to bilingual teachers, School-Based Support Teams (S.B.S.T.s) and parents of limited English-proficient (LEP) special education students. This report examines the start up phase of the RECURSO project. It is organized as follows: Chapter I provides background information and a description of the RECURSO project plans; Chapter II presents evaluation methodology and findings; and Chapter III presents conclusions and recommendations.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Public Law 94-142 (The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1974) not only addresses the needs of handicapped children in general, but those of children who are limited English proficient (LEP) as well. With regard to the latter population, the law states the following: Testing and evaluation procedures used for the evaluation and placement of handicapped children must not be racially or culturally discriminatory. When feasible, testing is to be done in the child's language. Public Law 94-142 also states that evaluations and reports are to be made available to parents. Also, if the parents object to the placement recommended for their children, hearings and appeal procedures are to be made available to them. In order for this to occur, pertinent information must be communicated to the parents of LEP children using the appropriate language.

The Division of Special Education (D.S.E.) of the City of New York has set as its mission the provision of appropriate educational programs in the least restrictive environments for all students with handicapping conditions. D.S.E. provides instructional and support services to more than 115,000 special education students. Of these, more than 9,000 have been identified as limited English proficient (LEP). Ninety percent of these are native speakers of Spanish.

In an effort to provide for the special needs of this population, the Board of Education of the City of New York has taken a number of steps: Since 1983, the Language Assessment Battery (LAB), developed to identify LEP students in general education, has been administered to special education students. Those who score below the twenty-first percentile are entitled to bilingual instructional services. An effort has also been made to hire qualified bilingual instructors to provide bilingual services to these students. Finally, LEP students who are suspected of having handicapping conditions are referred to D.S.E. for evaluation.

Because of a general shortage of qualified bilingual special education personnel, D.S.E. has attempted to expand its base of qualified bilingual instructional and assessment personnel through more aggressive recruitment and is working to develop the knowledge and skills of its bilingual personnel through staff development. With this in mind, the Office of Reimbursable Programs of the Division of Special Education in consultation with the Office of Bilingual Education developed Project

RECURSO -- a Title VII instructional support model designed to improve the skills of bilingual special education personnel currently working with LEP, special education students.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Proposed Participant Selection Procedures

In preparation for Project RECURSO's start-up, the Office of Bilingual Services identified the schools within the New York City School System which had the greatest number of LEP students in self-contained special education classes, grades three through eight. These grades were targeted because they had large numbers of LEP special education students who were underserved with regard to bilingual services, and had not previously received assistance under Title VII.

Of the 32 community school districts in New York City, 14 were selected; from these districts, 20 schools were targeted. Plans were made to involve all LEP special education students, their teachers, and the School-Based Support Teams (S.B.S.T.s -- three-member interdisciplinary teams who are responsible for the psychological and educational assessment of special education students) at each of these 20 schools. In total, the Division of Special Education anticipated the participation of 350 students, approximately 35 bilingual teachers, and 10 S.B.S.T.s.

Proposed Objectives and Strategies

The ultimate long-range goal of Project RECURSO was to increase LEP special education students' movement toward less restrictive environments by enhancing assessment procedures and instructional services provided to them. Project RECURSO had three basic objectives:

- to improve the quality of assessment procedures for LEP students referred to special education;
- to improve the quality of instruction for special education LEP students; and
- to improve the quality of parent-school interaction.

The original RECURSO design, also set specific outcome objectives as indicators of program success to be met by students participants at the end of each year (See Appendix).

A professonal bilingual staff composed of a program coordinator, two teacher trainers, a social worker, an educational evaluator, and a psychologist was to implement Project RECURSO. They were to accomplish each of the project objectives through the specific strategies described below.

To improve the quality of assessment procedures, the role of the RECURSO staff was to gather information concerning the most current, non-biased test procedures and materials available on the market and to provide training to S.B.S.T.s in their use. The training was especially designed to improve testing procedures for language-minority and limited English-proficient (L.M./LEP) students to better identify those who were language impaired as opposed to those who were simply of limited English proficiency. More specifically, particularly during the start-up phase of the project, the duties of the RECURSO staff were to consist of: surveying S.B.S.T.s to determine their needs in the area of bilingual testing; gathering information on current testing techniques and materials;

contacting universities and educational publishers to locate assessment materials currently available and determining their suitability for New York City's student population; identifying cultural issues which might have an impact on LEP special education students and their parents' ability to participate in the testing and learning process; assembling training materials for distribution to field S.B.S.T.s; and offering workshops on bilingual assessment procedures.

RECURSO was designed to improve the quality of instruction provided to LEP special education students through a variety of strategies. The project originally proposed that the two RECURSO teacher trainers would provide both individual and group training in bilingual instructional techniques to the teachers in the designated RECURSO schools. They were to provide demonstration lessons, assist teachers in developing individualized instructional approaches for specific students, and conduct after-school workshops and summer institutes on instructional strategies. In order to further develop the skills of participating teachers, they were to be provided the opportunity to take university courses for which they would receive tuition reimbursement.

In order to improve the quality of parent-school interaction, the entire RECURSO staff was to provide workshops to the parents of participating students on all aspects of special education services. The workshops were designed to familiarize parents with the policies and procedures of the D.S.E. and to provide them with techniques to assist their children in the learning process.

II. METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

Originally the Division of Special Education set specific outcome objectives to be met at the end of each program year. However, because implementation was the major program issue during the first funding cycle, it forms the focus of this evaluation. O.E.A. set three major evaluation objectives for Project RECURSO in its first year: to provide a description of program participants' characteristics, to report on the extent to which the project had been implemented during at the end of the first year, and to report on participants' satisfaction with the project's training activities. This chapter describes the process of data collection and analysis and reports on the results of each evaluation objective.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE I: CHARACTERISTICS OF RECURSO PARTICIPANTS

Evaluation Questions:

Specific evaluation questions were addressed with regard to participant characteristics. They were:

- Who participated in the project?
- What were the age, grade-level, and achievement characteristics of the students who participated?
- What were the areas of specialization, credentials, and training experiences of participating teachers?
- Did RECURSO serve the teacher and student populations for which it was designed?

Data Collection and Analysis

Sample. O.E.A. sought to collect data for all designated RECURSO students and teachers. Because of limited RECURSO staff resources and the short period of program implementation, all requested data could not be retrieved.

Instrumentation and Data Collection. O.E.A. developed a fifteen-item questionnaire to tap information about participating teachers' backgrounds and professional experiences. Student information was collected from central computer files by matching individual student identification numbers from the RECURSO roster with those from the LAB test file maintained by the Board of Education. Such information as grade level, age, and English proficiency was retrieved from this source. Data collection was limited because many LEP, special education students were not found in central surveys. Many apparently had not been LAB tested.*

Analysis. O.E.A. aggregated and organized frequency data for a descriptive presentation of specific student and teacher characteristics. The data were compared with the criteria of the project proposal.

Evaluation Findings

Characteristics of Selected Students. In total, 362 students were selected to participate in the project. Overall, complete or partial data were obtained for 230 RECURSO students ranging in age from seven to 13 years with 79 percent falling between nine and 12 years (see Figure 1). All students for whom data were available were in grades two

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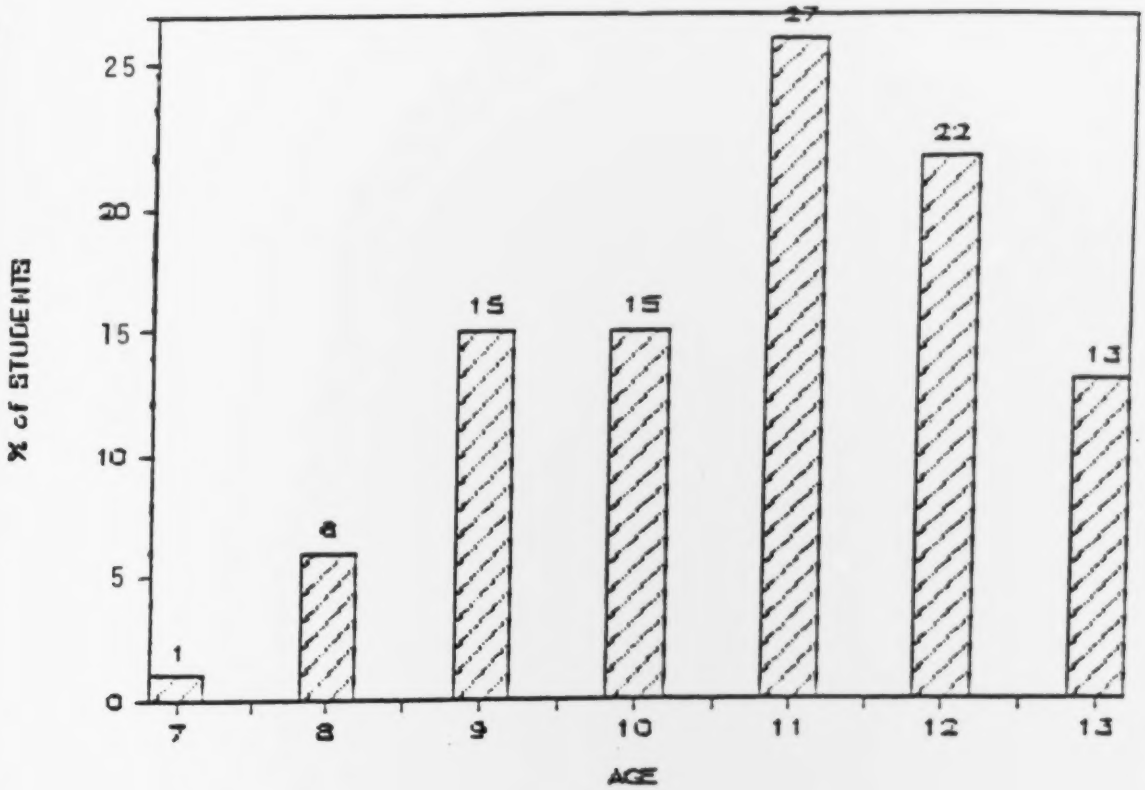
* Although data collection for LEP students is now more systematic, the most complete source of information for these students in 1985-86 was the LAB test file.

FIGURE 1

Age Distribution of RECURSO Students
(N = 222)[a]



Source: LAB datafile, spring 1986

[a]Refers to the number of RECURSO students for whom these data were available.

- RECURSO students ranged in age from seven to 13.
- About half were 11 or 12.

through six; 89 percent were in grades three through six (see Figure 2).

LAB percentile scores were used as indicators of RECURSO students' English proficiency (see Figure 3). Of the participants with LAB scores, 91 percent scored below the 21 percentile and almost 60 percent scored at or below the fifth percentile, thus demonstrating that student participants selected for the program were among the most limited English-proficient.

Overall, the typical RECURSO student was between nine and 12 years of age, was in grades three through six, and had a LAB score which indicated a very limited proficiency in English. The majority of students in the classes selected to participate in RECURSO had the characteristics for which the program was designed.

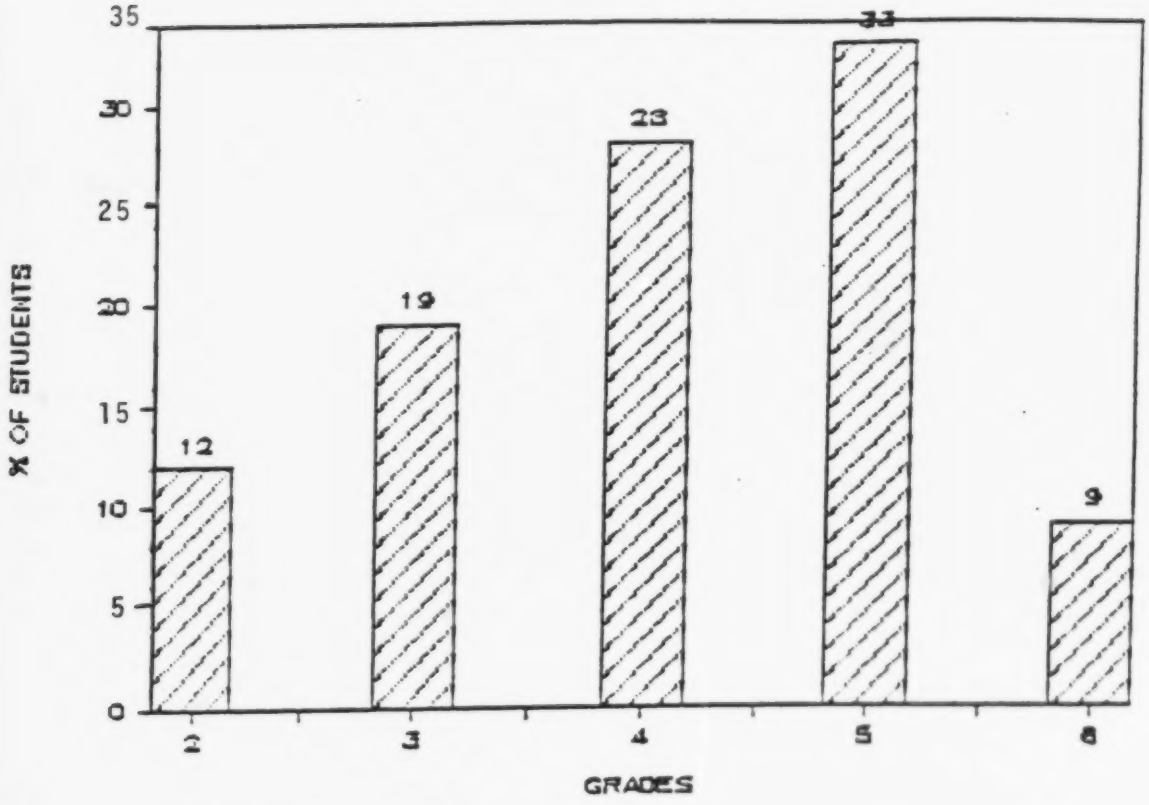
Characteristics of Participating Teachers. Although the training activities of Project RECURSO were offered to a large audience of teachers and S.B.S.T.s who work with LEP special education students, the primary target population for training consisted of the 34 teachers who worked directly with the targeted classes of students. The following section provides information about these teachers' countries of origin, their education, credentials and experience.

The majority (59 percent) of the RECURSO teachers were from the United States (44 percent from Puerto Rico and 15 percent from the mainland). Twenty-one percent were European (Spain); and the remaining 21 percent were from Latin American countries (see Figure 4).

Of the 34 RECURSO teachers, 31 responded to the question about their undergraduate degrees. The vast majority of teachers (68 percent) had earned their undergraduate degrees in education (special or general) or

FIGURE 2

Grade Level of RECURSO Students
(N = 215)[a]



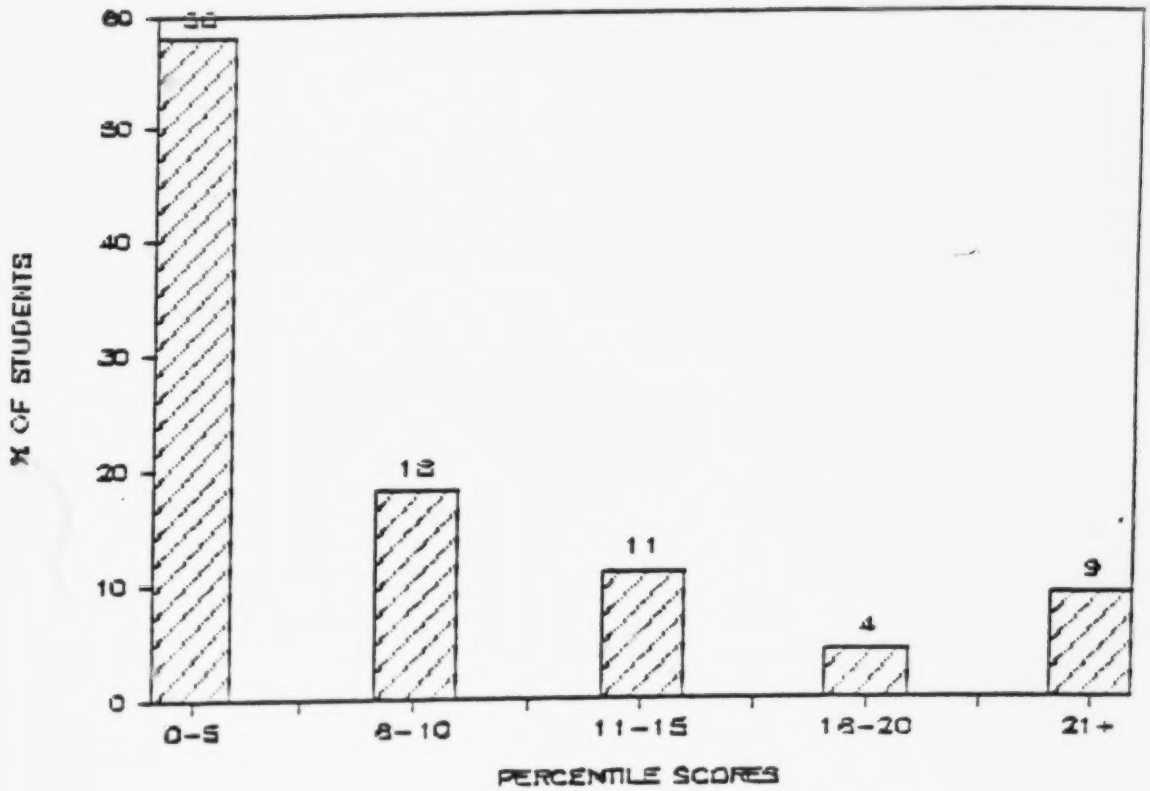
Source: D.S.E. Databank

[a]Refers to the number of RECURSO students for whom this information was available.

- RECURSO students were served in grades two through five, and eight.
- Most students served were in grades four and five.

FIGURE 3

LAB Percentile Scores of RECURSO Students
(N = 230)[a]



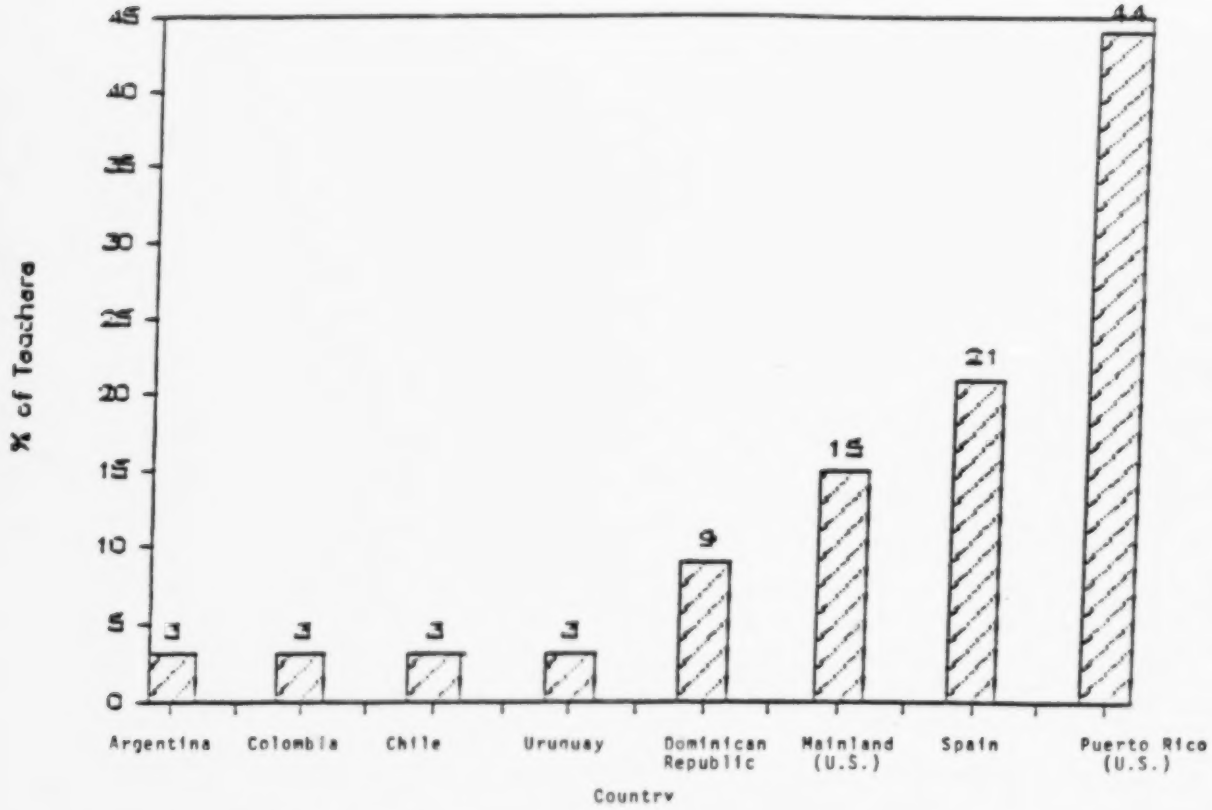
Source: LAB datafile, spring 1986

[a]Of the 362 RECURSO students reported as served by program staff, LAB information was obtained for 230.

- About 60 percent of the RECURSO students for whom data were available scored at or below the fifth percentile on the LAB, indicating that their proficiency in English was very limited.

FIGURE 4

Country of Origin of RECURSO Teachers
(N = 34)



Source: RECURSO Teacher Survey.

- Almost 60 percent of the participating teachers were from the United States mainland or Puerto Rico.
- About one-fifth of the participants came from Spain.
- Twenty-one percent came from Latin America.

psychology. Twenty-three percent earned their degrees in languages or Puerto Rican studies; and 10 percent earned them in science, business or art. Thus the great majority of RECURSO teachers (90 percent) earned their undergraduate degrees in areas applicable to the teaching of LEP special education students. Nineteen teachers reported that they held masters degrees. Of this number, 74 percent had earned them in special education or psychology, 16 percent earned them in education or Spanish, and the remaining 11 percent were in unspecified fields.

Of the 34 teachers, 25 reported that they had experience teaching special education classes. Of these, 72 percent reported that they had three or less years of experience. The remaining 28 percent reported that they had between four and nine years of experience (see Figure 5).

All 34 teachers responded to the question concerning their experience teaching LEP students. Forty-seven percent reported that they had experience teaching English as a second language and 94 percent reported that they had experience teaching bilingual education.

Overall, the typical RECURSO teacher had teaching credentials in areas that were applicable to the teaching of LEP special education students. S(he) did, however have limited teaching experience. The RECURSO program was designed to provide learning opportunities for just such a teacher.

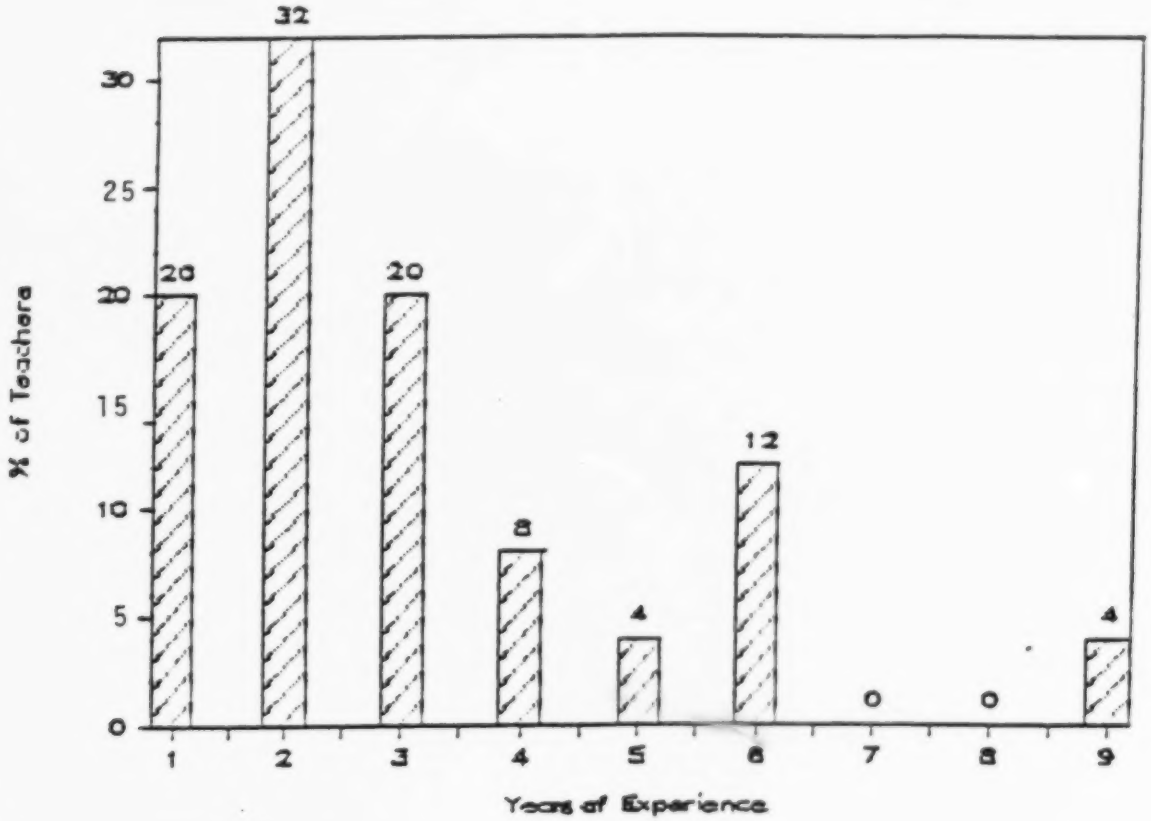
EVALUATION OBJECTIVE II: PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Evaluation Questions

Specific evaluation questions were addressed with regard to program implementation. They were:

FIGURE 5

RECURSO Teachers' Years of Experience Teaching Special Education
(N = 25)[a]



Source: RECURSO Teacher Survey.

[a]Refers to the number of teachers who responded to the item.

- Over 70 percent of the teachers who responded had three years of special education teaching experience or less.
- Only about 20 percent had five years or more of experience in special education.

- Was the program implemented as proposed?
- What issues arose which affected implementation?
- What activities took place?

Evaluation Procedures

All RECURSO staff who had been hired as of August 1986 were interviewed to generate a descriptive report of program implementation. O.E.A. developed an interview schedule based on the evaluation questions described above and then aggregated all staff responses. The following description is based on the responses.

Evaluation Findings. Funds for Project RECURSO were available as of September 10, 1985. However, the first RECURSO staff member (a teacher trainer) was not hired until February, 1986 due to a number of procedural obstacles in the hiring process. She was followed by the program coordinator in March, and an educational evaluator in May. The social worker was hired in June and a second teacher trainer began work in September. As of that date, the psychologist position still remained open, delaying the full implementation of the assessment component. Thus the project was not staffed as proposed during the first year. The core staff made up of the coordinator, educational evaluator, social worker, and a teacher trainer implemented the project during the last three months (June, July and August) of the program year.

To introduce this program to participating districts and schools, the RECURSO coordinator initially met with special education regional

assistant superintendents and site supervisors. She reported that all personnel on this level were quite receptive to the program. After obtaining agreement on school site selection, she met with the principals of participating schools to introduce both the program and the teacher trainer. The coordinator reported that some principals were initially resistant to introducing bilingual instructional techniques which might differ from approaches already established in their schools. The coordinator countered this resistance by explaining that the teacher trainer's role was to advise rather than to impose a particular approach to bilingual education.

The training of RECURSO staff covered project goals and objectives and bilingual instruction and assessment issues. Once they were hired, RECURSO staff members initially met with the coordinator to receive a general orientation to the project. Thereafter, they met on a bimonthly basis to review their work. Additionally, the coordinator made herself available to all her staff members for training on a one-to-one, as-needed basis.

Due to the difficulties encountered in obtaining staff, service delivery in the first year of the project was limited. However, a number of training events were organized, carried out by RECURSO staff and made available to the bilingual teachers, S.B.S.T.s, and parents of LEP, special education students attending the 20 targeted RECURSO schools. Certain events were made available to <u>all</u> interested teachers and S.B.S.T.s regardless of whether or not they were targeted by RECURSO. This was part of the original RECURSO project design. All RECURSO staff

members including the coordinator, the educational evaluator, the teacher trainer, and the social worker conducted these training events.

Program activities consisted of five different training op-portunities: one-on-one, on-site training sessions; regional, after-school workshops; summer institutes; a teacher course reimbursement program; and parent workshops.

Individual, on-site training sessions were provided by program staff to the targeted bilingual teachers in the 20 RECURSO schools. They were conducted on a one-on-one, as-needed basis during the spring of 1986. In total, 54 sessions were provided to 34 teachers covering a variety of topics related to bilingual instruction.

Five regional after-school workshops were provided by RECURSO staff (one in each of the special education regions excluding the City-wide, low-incidence programs) during May and June of 1986. They were open to all interested bilingual teachers and S.B.S.T.s. A total of 54 S.B.S.T.s and 78 teachers received training in a variety of subjects primarily related to bilingual instructional approaches. Bilingual assessment topics were also included, but only to a limited degree. Approximately 75 percent of the participants were targeted RECURSO personnel.

Two four-day institutes were provided by RECURSO staff in the summer of 1986. They were open to all interested bilingual teachers and S.B.S.T.s in the city and consisted of a number of workshop sessions. Workshops addressed the following 12 topic areas:

- Reading
- Bilingual reading and writing
- Instructional strategies

- The Individual Education Program
- Language development
- Bilingual education
- Instructional materials for LEP students
- The use of videotaping in language development
- Multicultural education
- Learning through drama
- The Brigance test
- Classroom management

In total, 36 S.B.S.T.s and 76 bilingual teachers received training at the RECURSO summer institutes. Approximately 50 percent of the participants were targeted RECURSO personnel.

RECURSO offered a tuition reimbursement program during the 1985-86 program year to encourage bilingual teachers to take courses in topics related to bilingual instruction at their local colleges. A total of 54 teachers registered college courses with RECURSO and were reimbursed for their tuition.

RECURSO staff organized seven parent workshops during May and June of 1986 covering a variety of topics related to parents' rights and child development. RECURSO teacher trainers prepared bilingual flyers announcing the workshops and distributed them to the teachers of the targeted RECURSO students so that they could take them home to their parents. A total of 70 parents participated in these workshops.

Despite the fact that only a four-person core RECURSO staff operated during the summer months and that most of these training events took place after school hours, 54 one-on-one sessions were provided to teachers, a total of 208 teachers and S.B.S.T.s received training at workshops, 54 teachers took college courses in related areas, and 70 parents were provided information through the RECURSO program. Given

the limited human resources available, the results appear to be substantial.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE III: PARTICIPANTS' WORKSHOP EVALUATIONS

Evaluation Questions

Specific evaluation questions were addressed with regard to participants' (teachers, parents, and S.B.S.T.s) feedback about RECURSO workshops. They are:

- To what extent did the workshops provide participants with new and useful information?
- Did the workshops meet the parents' expectations and did they find them interesting?
- How knowledgeable were the speakers perceived to be with regard to workshop topics?
- Were participants actively involved in the workshops?
- Were workshop materials perceived as adequate?

Data Collection and Analysis

Sample. In order to gather pertinent information on the above evaluation questions, questionnaires were distributed to all teachers and S.B.T.S.s who participated in after-school and summer institute workshops and to parents who participated in the parent workshops. A total of 90 S.B.S.T.s, 154 teachers, and 18 parents filled out questionnaires.

Instrumentation and Data Collection. O.E.A. developed participant workshop feedback questionnaires which addressed all of the above-

mentioned evaluation questions. Participants were to rate several aspects of the training on a scale which ranged from one (low) to four (high). These questionnaires were then distributed by RECURSO staff to teachers at the after-school workshops and summer institutes, as well as to parent workshop participants.

Analysis. O.E.A. aggregated the number of participant responses for each questionnaire item, calculating a frequency distribution for each.

Evaluation Findings

After-School and Summer Institute Workshops. Participants (S.B.S.T.s and teachers) in both the after-school workshops and summer institutes completed brief evaluation surveys at the end of each session. When the respondents were asked if their training had accomplished its purpose, 92 percent gave positive responses. Table 1 presents the results. Ninety-seven percent of the respondents reported that the information which was presented was useful; all considered that the workshop speakers were knowledgeable in the training area. Ninety-two percent of the respondents reported that they had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and express opinions, and an equal proportion reported that the training materials were helpful. Thus, more than ninety-one percent of the respondents replied positively to each of the evaluation questions.

Parent Workshops. Parents who attended the RECURSO parent workshops were asked to complete brief evaluation surveys at the end of each session. Of the 70 parents who participated in the workshops, only 18 filled them out. Possible reasons for this limited number could be that parents may be unaccustomed to providing feedback about institutionally-sponsored events or, they may feel uncomfortable with written material.

TABLE 1

Participants' Evaluation of After-School and Summer Institute Workshops
N = 529[a]

Questions	Ratings in Percent (Low) 1	2	3	(High) 4
To what extent did the training accomplish its purpose?	*	4.0	29.0	67.0
How useful did you find the information presented?	*	3.0	19.0	78.0
How knowledgeable was the speaker in the training area?	*	*	12.0	88.0
How sufficient were opportunities to ask questions and to express opinions?	*	5.0	25.0	67.0[b]
How helpful were the training materials?	*	4.0	28.0	64.0[b]

Source: RECURSO Participant Survey.

*Equals less than one percent.

[a]Number of evaluation forms submitted by teachers and S.B.S.T. members who participated in after-school and summer institute workshops (an individual could have submitted multiple forms).

[b]Some row totals do not equal 100 percent because of missing data.

- Participants' responses were generally very positive.
- Participants appeared to rate the speakers' knowledge and the usefulness of the information presented most highly.

TABLE 2

Participants' Evaluation of Parent Workshops
N = 18[a]

Questions	Ratings in Percent (Low) 1	2	3	(High) 4
How much did you learn at the workshop?	*	*	11.1	88.9
Was the information useful?	*	*	11.1	88.9
Did the workshop meet your expectations?	*	*	33.3	61.1[D]
Was the workshop interesting?	*	*	27.8	66.7
Were there enough opportunities to ask questions?	*	11.1	27.8	61.1
Did you actively participate in the workshop?	5.5	*	44.4	38.9[D]
Was the instructor capable?	*	*	38.9	55.6[D]
Were the materials adequate?	*	*	55.6	38.9[D]

Source: RECURSO participant evaluation survey.

*Equals less than one percent.

[a]Refers to the number of participants who filled out evaluation surveys. (The low response rate may be due to parents being unaccustomed to giving feedback or being uncomfortable with written materials.)

[D]Row totals do not equal 100 percent because of missing data.

- Parent respondents rated the amount and usefulness of the workshop information most favorably.

Respondents rated several aspects of the training on a scale which ranged from one (low) to four (high). Table 2 presents the results. One-hundred percent of the respondents reported that they had learned useful information from the workshops. Ninety-four percent reported that the workshops had been interesting and had met their expectations. More than 83 percent reported that they actively participated in the workshops and had sufficient opportunity to ask questions. Ninety-five percent reported that the workshop instructor was capable, and an equal proportion considered that the materials used in the workshop were adequate. Overall, more than 83 percent of the respondents replied postively to each of the evaluation questions.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The goals of Project RECURSO were to improve the quality of assessment procedures and instruction provided to limited English-proficient special education students and to improve the interaction between those students' parents and their schools. The basic strategy used to reach these goals was to provide training opportunities to the S.B.S.T.s, teachers, and parents of those students.

The project targeted 20 schools (and the S.B.S.T.s affiliated with those schools), 362 students, their parents, and 34 teachers.

Conclusions derived from O.E.A.'s findings are the following.

- The majority of students and teachers in the classes selected to participate in the project had the characteristics for which the program was designed. Thus the project served bilingual personnel who work with the LEP special education student group which historically has required the most special education services, has been under-served with regard to bilingual services, and has not received assistance under Title VII prior to this time.
- Incomplete staffing of the project hampered the full implementation of the program and precluded making any statements about student and teacher outcome measures or the achievement of all three program goals.
- Despite the staffing problem, Project RECURSO provided five different types of training opportunities: one-on-one, on-site training sessions, regional after-school workshops, two four-day summer institutes, a teacher course reimbursement program, and seven parent workshops.
- Participants who responded to the O.E.A. evaluation surveys rated the RECURSO workshops highly.

Given the limited RECURSO staff and the brief time (three months) during which that core staff of four operated, the number of training activities provided, the number of teachers, S.B.S.T.s, and parents who

participated, and the positive feedback given to the quality and relevance of the workshops appear to be substantial.

In conclusion, RECURSO staff succeeded in providing training activities which addressed two out of the three basic project objectives: improvement of instruction through teacher training and improvement of parent-school interaction through parent workshops. The only objective which was not addressed was that of assessment, due primarily to the lack of a staff psychologist in the first year.

In the project's second year, the evaluation team recommends that the RECURSO team:

- Implement the project as proposed.
- Staff the project as proposed.
- Expand efforts to involve RECURSO parents in the workshops by supplementing each pre-set RECURSO workshop agenda with topics which are of immediate interest to parents such as current changes in immigration laws or E.S.L. training. Additionally, child care should be provided on the premises during parent meetings.

APPENDIX

OBJECTIVE 1: To improve the quality of assesment through information gathering and S.B.S.T. training. By the conclusion of the first full year of project implementation:

- RECURSO S.B.S.T.s will have identified instruments which are appropriate for the assessment of LEP special education students.
- Thirty percent of the targeted S.B.S.T.s will receive training in new strategies and tests available for the assessment of LEP special education students.

OBJECTIVE 2: To improve the quality of instruction through teacher training. By the conclusion of the first full year of project implementation targeted classroom teachers will have:

- Received workshops on the development of different skill areas using the transitional bilingual instructional approach.
- Received workshops in instructional techniques and materials appropriate for use with LEP special education students.
- Received training in the interpretation of student assessment data.

OBJECTIVE 3: To improve the quality of parent-school interaction through parent involvement. By the conclusion of the first full year of project implementation, 30 percent of the parents of students participating in Project RECURSO will have:

- Received workshops acquainting them with the policies and procedures of the school system and the Division of Special Education particularly student assessment procedures and student I.E.P.s.
- Received workshops on methods they can use to work with their children's educational needs.
- Received workshops in various interest areas such as community resources.
- Received workshops assisting them to develop their own English language skills.

New York City
Board of Education

110 Livingston Street
Brooklyn, New York 11201

Nathan Quinones
Chancellor

Office of Educational Assessment
Richard Guttenberg
Director
(718) 935-3767

A SUMARY OF THE PROJECT RECURSO END OF YEAR PROJECT 1985-86*

This report examines the 1985-86 RECURSO project which operated in 20 sites in five special education regions of the City of New York. Title VII funds were awarded during the 1985-86 school year to the Division of Special Education to initiate a training program for bilingual teachers, School-Based Support Teams (S.B.S.T.s) and parents of limited English-proficient (LEP) special education students. The training activities were designed to meet the three basic goals of the project: to improve the assessment process, the delivery of instructional services, and the interaction between the schools and the parents of LEP special education students. This evaluation presents the characteristics of students and teachers who were designated participants in the RECURSO project, the implementation of the program and the participants' evaluation of the quality and relevance of the training events offered by Project RECURSO.

As specified in the project guidelines, RECURSO targeted schools within the New York City School system which had the greatest number of bilingual, self-contained, special education classes of students in grades three through eight with low LAB scores. The RECURSO population consisted of 20 schools and the S.B.S.T.s affiliated with them, 362 students (and their parents) and 34 teachers. Most training events provided by the RECURSO project were open to all interested S.B.S.T.s and teachers of LEP, special education students.

The majority of the RECURSO students were between nine and 12 years of age, in grades three through six, and had LAB scores within the lowest five percentiles. The majority of RECURSO teachers had teaching credentials in areas germane to the teaching of LEP special education students; however, they had limited teaching experience. Thus the majority of students and teachers in the classes selected to participate in the project had the characteristics for which the program was designed.

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* This summary is based on "Project RECURSO End of Year Report," prepared by the Office of Educational Assessment, Special Education Evaluation Unit.

Even though the project was not fully staffed during the first year, five different types of training opportunities were provided: one-on-one, on-site training sessions (54 sessions for targeted RECURSO teachers); five regional after-school workshops attended by 54 S.B.S.T.s and 78 teachers (approximately 75 percent of whom were designated RECURSO personnel); two four-day summer institutes attended by 36 S.B.S.T.s and 74 teachers (approximately 50 percent of whom were designated RECURSO personnel); and seven parent workshops provided to a total of 70 parents. Ninety-one percent of the teachers and S.B.S.T.s and 83 percent of the parents who participated in the RECURSO workshops gave positive feedback on each aspect of the workshops.

RECURSO staff provided training activities which fully addressed two out of the three basic project goals: improvement of instruction through teacher training and improvement of parent-school interaction through parent workshops. The only goal which was not fully addressed was that of improving assessment, due primarily to the fact that the psychologist was not hired during the first year. However, other RECURSO staff members began to gather relevant information on appropriate assessment procedures and provided limited training to teachers and S.B.S.T.s in this area.

The Division of Special Education set specific outcome objectives to be met at the end of the first program year. However, because implementation was so limited during this period, discussion of outcome objectives was considered premature; thus it is not included in this report.

The following are recommendations for the second year:

- Implement the project as proposed,
- Staffing the project as proposed,
- Expand efforts to involve RECURSO parents in the workshops by supplementing each pre-set RECURSO workshop agenda with topics which are of immediate interest to parents such as current changes in immigration laws or E.S.L. training. Additionally, childcare should be provided on the premises during parent meetings.